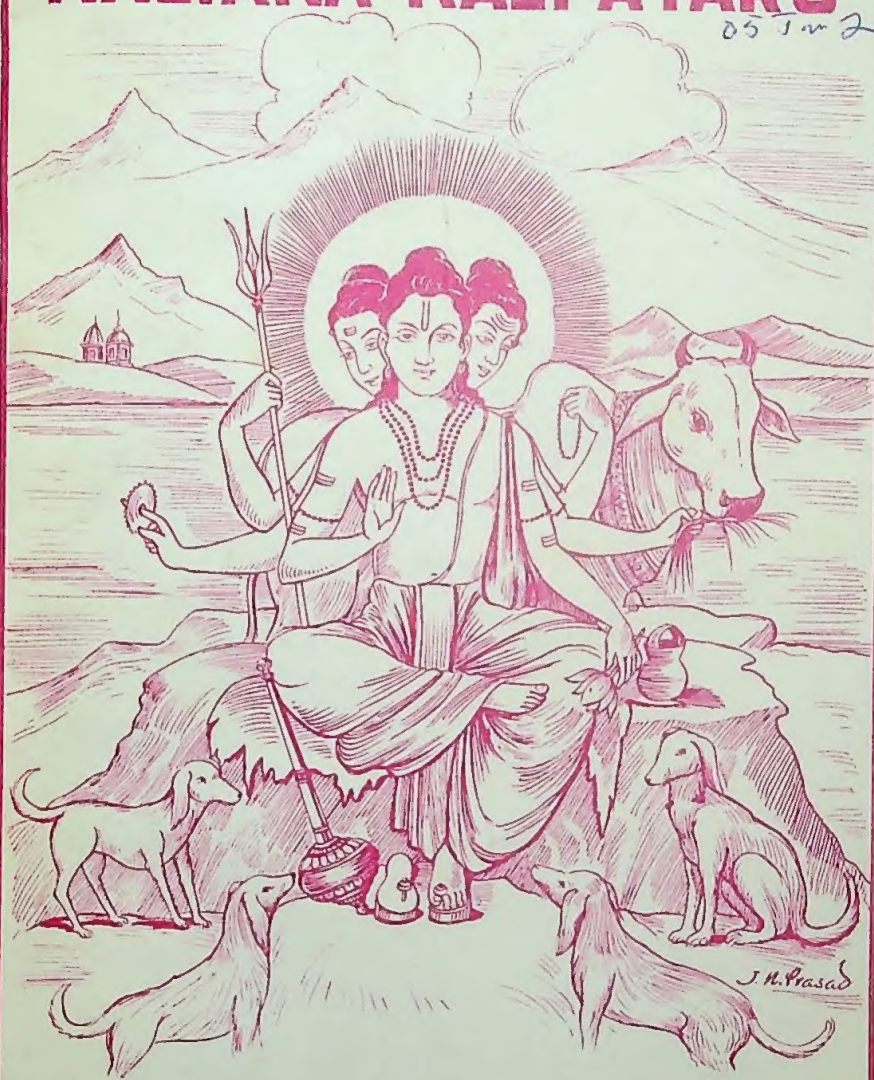


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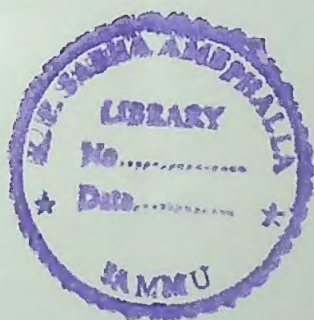
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Datta, Dayadhvam, Dāmyata

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते। पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



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तदेतदेवैषा दैवी वागनुवदति स्तनयितुर्द द इति दाम्यत दत्त दयध्वमिति
तदेतत् त्रयं शिक्षेद्दमं दानं दयामिति।

"Still the thundering sound of the clouds propagates the instructions of Prajāpati—*Da, Da, Da*, in the form of *Dāmyata, Datta, Dayadhvam* (have self control, be charitable and be kind)."

—*Bṛhadāranyakopaniṣad* (V. 2. 3.)



Hindu Conception of God

—*Brahmalina Sri Jayadayal Goyandka*

Question—God, who is denoted in the scriptures by words like omniscient, supreme lord, all-pervading, regulator of all hearts, etc., whom does he know, whose lord is He, and whose heart does He regulate? What is the name and form of that whose knower is God? Is it different from, or identical with, God?

Answer—*Brahma*, the embodiment of consciousness and Bliss, is without beginning and infinite. The whole of the objective world which is a combination of Matter and Spirit and is a creation of *Māyā* constituted of the three *Guṇas* or modes (*Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*), is contained only in a fraction of *Brahma*. The part of *Brahma* which appears as creation is called *Brahma* with attributes (*Saguṇa Brahma*); and the part which is untouched by creation is called *Brahma* without attributes (*Nirguṇa Brahma*). It is the former or *Brahma* with attributes, who is pointed out by words like omniscient, supreme lord, all-pervading, knower of all hearts, etc. It is He who is the knower, lord and controller of hearts of all that is contained in this world of Matter and Spirit; it is through His proximity that the mind carries out the mental function, the intellect determines an object, and the whole world is revealed to us. He is infinite, endless, eternal, immoveable, fixed, invariable, Truth and Bliss itself.

Māyā is matter and is mutable; it is *Māyā* which is known by the name of *Prakṛti*. This *Prakṛti* is the *Śakti*

(energy) of God and is subordinate to Him. It has two aspects—*Vidyā* and *Avidyā*. *Vidyā* is that aspect of *Māyā* through which all the elements of creation are revealed to us, both that which is immutable or permanent, and that which is untrue or subject to change. *Avidyā* is that which covers true knowledge and manifests all things in a wrong perspective. *Avidyā* is destroyed through *Vidyā*. The material world constituted of the twenty-four elements is nothing but a projection or creation of *Prakṛti*. From *Prakṛti* in her original state is evolved the *Mahat-tattva*, *Mahat-tattva* evolves *Ahaṅkāra* or the Ego, from *Ahaṅkāra* are evolved the five subtle elements or *Tanmātrās* as they are called in Hindu philosophy. Again, *Ahaṅkāra* evolves the mind and the five *Tanmātrās* evolve the five organs of perception, five organs of action, and the five gross elements.* This is how *Prakṛti* is divided into twenty-four elements.

Individual consciousness covered by *Māyā* is called *Jīva*, or the individual soul. *Jīvas* born of *Māyā* are infinite in number. Although a part of God, the *Jīva* is known as the *Jīva* because of his contact with *Māyā*. This contact with *Māyā* is beginningless, but it has a termination. The knowledge of the *Jīva* is covered by the *Avidyā* aspect of *Māyā* that is why the *Jīva* has lost the true knowledge. The *Jīva* realizes the *Paramātmā* (God) when his *Avidyā* is destroyed by the *Vidyā*. Just as the fire is extinguished when it has burnt the fuel, similarly the *Vidyā* ceases when it has destroyed the *Avidyā*. The *Jīva* then, reaches the *Kevala* or absolute state beyond *Māyā*, or gets merged in the

* The organ of hearing, the organ of touch, the organ of sight, the organ of taste and the organ of smell—these are the five organs of perception. Hands, feet, mouth, the organ of excretion and the organ of generation—these are the five organs of action. Sound, touch, colour, taste and smell these are the five *Tanmātrās*. Ether, air, fire, water and earth these are the five gross elements.

Paramātmā, the embodiment of Truth, Knowledge and Bliss.

The *Jīvas* are, again subdivided into two classes—

(1) Possessing locomotion and (2) lacking locomotion. *Devas* (gods), human beings, beasts, birds, insects, etc., possess locomotion; whereas trees, creepers, mountains, etc., lack the power of locomotion.

God is both different from as well as identical with this world consisting of Matter and Spirit. This can be understood by the analogy of dream, which is a creation of the dreamer. Or of air, which is a creation of ether. Air originates from ether, and ether is also the substratum of air. As an evolute of ether, air is identical with it; but as it appears to exist in the sky, and as separate from it, it has also a separate existence. Similarly, one who dreams is the originator of the dream, and he is also the substratum of the dream. Being the originator of the dream he and the dream are identical, but inasmuch as the dream appears as separate from the dreamer during the state of dream, it has also, a separate existence. On the same analogy, God or *Brahma* with attributes, though He is the material and efficient cause of creation, is both separate and unseparated from creation, and He is the lord, knower, all-pervading, controller of the hearts of all. The *Jīva* perceives his dream through ignorance, and God perceives His creation through His power of *Yoga* or divine sport. God is Master of His own action, but the *Jīva* is not his master.



Uniqueness of Nāmajapa

—Swami Ramsukhdas

Sacrifice, charity, austerity, pilgrimage and observance of vows are all actions, but *Nāmajapa* is not action, it is cry. Suppose somebody is confronted with dacoits, they start looting and beating, the victim does not find enough strength in him and he raises a cry for rescue. This cry is not action. In a cry the person does not depend on his might and the sense of pride is completely absent, the victim absolutely depends upon him whom he calls. Thus in a (cry) calling loudly is not important but important is the personal relation with God.

Saints have said—

हरिया बंदीवान ज्यों, करियै कूक पुकार।

If somebody is bound against his wishes, he cries (for help). Similarly if a sincere appeal is made to God or His name is muttered, then the personal relation with God is established. The power inherent in the sense of oneness e.g., the relation with God is found in no action like sacrifice, charity or penance. So the influence of *Nāmajapa* is unique.

भायँ कुभायँ अनख आलसहूँ । नाम जपत मंगल दिसि दसहूँ ॥

(*Mānasa Bāl.* 28. 1)

This uniqueness generates through muttering names in anyway whatsoever, But if it is made with emotional sentiments or understanding, salvation is possible very soon—

सादर सुमिरन जे नर करहीं । भव बारिधि गोपद इव तरहीं ॥

The idea is that by muttering names emotionally and sincerely one can cross the ocean of the world like a ditch made by a cow hoof. He is not required to swim over the ocean and he crosses it without any effort. His eternal relation with God is spontaneously manifested.

Just as after feeling thirsty a man thinks of water. That remembrance of water is also identical with water, similarly remembrance of God is also identical with Him. Being insentient the water does not seek a thirsty person but God has an innate love for *Jīva* because the whole has a natural love for its parts. Although the well does not go to the thirsty; on the contrary the adverse happens but the lord Himself goes to the devotee. As a matter of fact wherever the devotee remembers god, He is already there. So remembering God or muttering his name is not action. Action is the evolute of *Prakṛti* but *Nāmajapa* is beyond the range of *Prakṛti*. In fact the worshipper and the worshipped both are above and apart from *Prakṛti*. Therefore the *Nāmajapa* makes the soul face to face with god because it is *Ātmā* which makes the cry and not the mind or intellect. Therefore *Nāmajapa* is beyond the *Guṇas*. Any activity mundane or spiritual is the function of inert. But since the goal is sentient (God), even the inert action is capacitated to lead towards sentient—

कर्म चैव तदर्थीयं सदित्येवाभिधीयते ॥

(*Gītā* XVII. 27)

We will go where our cherished goal will be. If the goal is God even the act of warfare will result in God-realization. Not only this but if the goal is sentient even the inert is charged with the sentience. For example the insentient body of *Mīrā* being charged with the divine sentience merged with the statue of the lord by chanting—“मेरे तो गिरधर गोपाल दूसरो न कोई” as she wholly surrendered to the Lord. Therefore it matters little if the action is inert, the

goal must not be of material things (pleasure seeking and accumulation).

It is mentioned in the *Śāstras* that the divine name possesses such a tremendous capacity of burning the sins that even the greatest sinner cannot commit so much sins. That power rests in the cry “O ! my Lord, O ! my Master.” In such a cry the words come out of the outer speech—the action, but the sigh is generated from the soul. The call that comes from within has a power. This power belongs to Him who is called (through the cry). For example the child weeps and cries for the mother. Since the child has a very close and inner relation with the mother so she cannot afford any delay; cannot engage herself elsewhere. Similarly if the divine name is muttered sincerely and with a truthful heart, the Lord cannot stay. All other things become secondary. The idea is that the divine name and its *Japa* has an unearthly and unique power which immediately leads for salvation. When Duḥśāsana started unclothing Draupadī then she cried—“गोविन्द द्वारकावासिन् कृष्ण गोपीजनप्रिय.” The Lord appeared. But he took some time to come since Draupadī called Him as ‘द्वारकावासी’. So the Lord had to go to Dwaraka first and then came there. If she had not addressed him so he would have appeared without any delay.

There were two devotees—one of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the other of Lord Rāma. Both remembered their chosen Lords. Lord Kṛṣṇa came very soon but Lord Rāma took some time to come for the simple reason that Rāma is emperor of emperors. It is but natural that procession of a king takes some time but there is nothing like that in regard of a shepherd boy. He needs no paraphernalia. Well, this is sentiment of a devotee. I happened to meet a gentle man in Ayodhya. He always kept a photo of child Rāma. He said, “I always worship child Rāma. I am afraid of the imperial aspect of Rāma, He is a king. If I commit a mistake,

he might imprison me. But I can even threaten the child Rāma, even give a slap or two." These are the sentiments of devotees. If a person Considers *Nāmajapa* not as an action but as a cry, his aim will materialise within no time and the divine love and his eternal relationship with Him, will be awakened. The divine love is concealed due to the mundane attachment, it will be manifested by sincere 'cries' for Him.



We commit an error in associating happiness with material possessions. It is also by error that we imagine we are the arbiters of our own destiny. But the error of errors lies in the assumption that objects outside (of ourselves) can cause or produce happiness within (ourselves). We forget our real nature. By serious introspection we are certain to know the truth that happiness lies within ourselves. It has to be sought only within.

—*The Mountain path*

It is said here that there is no liberation for him who is attached to the body, etc. and *Mukti* is possible only when we overcome identification with this body. The liberated man has no identification with the body. Who is a *Jivanmukta*? One who lives in this body, but is not attached to this body. Though he appears to be living in this body, he lives in the *Ātman*, his own divine nature. '*Suptasya na jāgaraṇam*', i.e., the sleeping man is not awake nor is the waking man a sleep; for, these two states are contradictory in nature.

—*Swamī Gokulananda*

Bliss through Faith

—*Nityalilalina Sri Hanumanprasad Poddar*

Do not pride yourself on your spiritual practices. Devote yourself, heart and soul to meditation and repetition of His name as behest from Him and for His sake, but do not allow any sense of your being a spiritual *Sādhaka* to enter your mind.

Have firm faith in God. The more you acquire this faith, the nearer you will come to God.

Faith in God is the only strength of true devotees. Surrendering themselves completely to God, they spend their life only in His remembrance.

The more your faith grows the more vivid will be your vision of Divine Grace.

Remember, there is none so benevolent, kind and loving as God and none can stand comparison with Him in Beauty and Glory. He is your constant companion. He is always ready with outstretched arms to press you to His bosom.

All that you see in this world belongs to Him; not only that, it is He who has assumed all these forms. Whatever is happening before you is nothing but His pastime. He is sporting with Himself.

This mystery will remain a sealed book to you so long as you do not surrender yourself completely to Him. Giving up all pride and self esteem take shelter under Him, have unshakable faith in His grace, and, renouncing all fear and anxiety, offer everything at the altar of His feet.

Keep your mind engaged in His thought. Gladly accept whatever He may be pleased to ordain for you; carry out willingly all His behests and placing your absolute reliance upon Him give up the very tendency to ask for boons and gifts.

To ask from Him is to be a loser. For, our own intellect can never consider our interests as deeply as He, who is our greatest friend and well-wisher.

Never forget that death is sure to come to you one day. Keep before your mind's eye the dreadful scene of death, picture to your mind the miserable plight of the human body in the grip of death, visualize the ghastly look of the dying man full of agony and despair. You are to meet the same fate one day.

The grim picture of death will make you shudder and fill you with dismay in the first instance, the world will appear gloomy to you and despair will take possession of your soul; but do not get unnerved. This despair itself will bring supreme joy to you. You will obtain a glimpse of God in it 'नैराश्यं परमं सुखम्'.

Never lose faith in God. To lose faith in Him is the greatest sin.

Have faith in the Divine Name. Remember: whatever the saints have said about the value of the Name is true to the very letter. Make a trial by taking shelter under the Name.

True satisfaction cannot be derived through son, wife or wealth. Had it been possible to derive satisfaction through these, it would have been surely attained by now, in one or other of the numberless forms of life through which we have passed. The source of true satisfaction is God alone, on attaining whom the *Jiva* is satisfied for all time to come.

Suffering is conducive to the unfoldment of true humanity in man. The life of a man who is true to himself blossoms

in misery alone. Gold shines best only when it is put in the furnace.

Always remain cheerful; never wear a sad countenance; be positive in your mind that for you no such thing as grief or sorrow was ever born in this world. In the All-blissful joy and merriment alone reigns supreme; there is no room for anxiety and care.

Remain absorbed in bliss, observing all about you the enchanting Form of the Lord. He who sees Him everywhere is himself nothing but an embodiment of Bliss.



Learning the signs of the Zodiac

It's reasonable to be afraid of dying, but love has more courage than reason. A stone is not so frightened of rain as a clod is.

This is the fifth scroll of the Mathnawi. It can help you find your way like the stars in the signs of the zodiac. But only a mariner who studies the stars and knows the directions they lead, can use them. To others there's nothing but looking at them.

From darkfall to day-break make yourself familiar with these stars.

Each one is boiling naphtha poured down on demons. Scorpions to them; to you, good companions.

The sagittarian bow attacks your enemies. The Aquarian bucket pours water for your crops. The Piscean fish wrecks the wandering boat. The truthful Bull helps with ploughing. The Sun-Lion tears the night to shreds and brings the honour of a glowing redness.

Every existence is poison to some and spirit-sweetness to others.

Be the Friend. Then you can eat from a poison jar and taste only clear discrimination.

—Open Secret

Śiva—the Infinite Divinity

—Kumble Vittal Rao

Our *Sanātana Dharma*, proclaims *Ekamevādvitīyam Brahma*, that there is only one Divinity and none the second. This one Divinity is the cause for all the manifest and unmanifest world. This divinity is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. (All pervasive, all powerful and all knowing). Such divinity is also above all names, forms and religions and even beyond human conception and reasoning. The divinity is both *Antaryāmī* and *Sarvāntarayāmī*. The idol worship is aimed at realisation of the Divine Truth, that all the deities are symbols of the only one Supreme Divinity. Lord Śiva, though known, as one among the *Trimūrti*, the powers of creation, maintenance and dissolution, are only the three facets of one such supreme Divinity. Lord Śiva is manifest in myriad forms and names and worshipped in several ways. Śiva the *Parabrahma* is formless and the *Liṅga* is only a symbol of the Infinite Divinity. *Om* is the first sound, which emanated in the universe, from the Infinite Śiva. The first *Jyoti* which appeared in the space, is also from Śiva, who is known as *Jyoti Swarūpa*. Śiva is born *Saguṇa Īśwara* and *Nirguṇa Brahma*.

Śiva Liṅga—symbol of the Infinite Universe—

Liṅga means symbol and *Śiva Liṅga* is only a symbol of the one Supreme Infinite Divinity, pervading the entire universe and beyond. *Śiva Liṅga* is generally made from stone, of the height of about 32 cms. in the shape of hemisphere embeded in an oval shaped base. The *Liṅga*

in semicircle shape, indicate the infinite Universe. Sky as it appears to us, as horizon and the oval shaped base, is the earth—

आकाशं लिंगमित्याहुः पृथिवी तस्य पीठिका।
आलयं सर्वदेवानाम् लयनाल्लिंगमुच्यते।

In the *Skanda Purāṇa*, it is said that *Ākāśa* (sky), is the *Liṅga*, the *Prthvī* (earth), is the base and *Liṅga* (infinity) is the temple for deities and all finally merge in the *Liṅga Rūpa*. It is also said that at the beginning of the Universe, a superlatively resplendent light shone in the universe, in the form of *Jyotirliṅga* (hemisphere) and it is *Śiva Tejas* as *Jaga Jyoti Swarūpa*. A legend goes that even Gods *Brahmā* and *Viṣṇu* could not measure, the height and depth of *Śivaliṅga*, as *Śiva*, the Infinite has no beginning or end. A few atheists and ignorant, label *Śiva Liṅga* as the genetic organ, which is reprehensible and indicate only their low thinking. As beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder, the divinity or vulgarity lies in the mental vision. Hence the right perspective is needed to understand the various symbols indicative of the Infinite Divinity. *Śiva Liṅga* is not a piece of stone or metal but is a symbol of the Supreme Infinite Divinity. *Liṅga* has no hands or feet or other organs, as of human form and *Liṅga* is therefore treated both as symbol of *Nirguṇa Brahma* and of *Saguṇa Īśwara*. It is a symbol of eternal universal consciousness and ever vibrant and responsive to the sincere prayers of the devotees. There are infinite instances to show how *Śiva* graced all, without the distinction of high or low, pundit or page. Even a wild hunter, a spider, a snake and an elephant had *Darśana* of *Śiva* through their own method of worship. Purity of heart i.e., *Citta Śuddhi* is needed, essentially for *Śiva Pūjā*. Everyone is generally allowed to do *Abhiṣeka*, to *Śiva Liṅga* and *Śiva* is easily accessible to all the earnest devotees without the need for any elaborate ritualistic *Pūjā Om*

Namaḥ Śivāya: Lord Śiva is being worshipped with the Divine *Mantra* 'Om Namaḥ Śivāya.' This *Pañcākṣarī* or the five lettered *Mantra* is said to be very potent, as the five primordial elements of the Universe i.e., Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Space are said to have emanated from each of these syllables. *Om* is *Praṇava* and known as the symbolic of the Supreme Divinity and hence *Om* is added to every Divine *Mantra*, to visualise the one Supreme Divinity in all the deities. Śiva is also called as the *Omkāra Swarūpa*. The word *Na* indicates the Earth or the *Prakṛti*, the cause for all the creation on the earth. *Ma* is known for water, essential for all creation and is also representative of the infinity, by its vast expanse of the ocean. *Śi* stands for *Agni*—heat and there is no life without heat. *Va* means 'Air', the sustainer of all life, *Ya* is space or *Ākāśa* which is infinite. Hence the *Pañcākṣarī Śiva Mantra* is known to represent the infinite Creation by the one Supreme Lord of the Universe i.e., Viśwanātha. Repetition of this *Pañcākṣarī Mantra*, slowly creates harmonious vibrations in the body and mind and also elevates the soul to the higher realms of Divine Bliss, apart from the infinite benefits, graced by Śiva, the supreme Divinity.

Symbolic physical form of Śiva—

Pārvatī and Parameśwara are treated as Eternal Parents of this universe. Śiva in the physical human form is mostly portrayed in the meditative posture, representing the perfect inner harmony and poise radiating serenity and tranquility. Śiva is said to be in eternal *Tapas*. *Dhyāna* revelling in Divine Bliss.

The physical things worn by Śiva, also symbolise the Infinite Divinity. The *Triśūla* the three pronged weapon, is indicative of the need to conquer the ego with our body, mind and intellect. The four legged deer stands for the four *Vedas*. *Damarū* is the sound from which *Om*, the first sound emanated

in the universe. Moon above the Śiva's head, symbolises the cool, blissful mind. Gaṅgā is known for continuous flow of water, destined ultimately to join the ocean and is suggestive of the need for perennial *Bhakti* to merge, in the Infinite Divinity. *Nāga*, the serpent, indicates the ego, with its venomous desires of *Kāma*, *Krodha* etc., but when conquered, it becomes an ornament and not an obstruction. The skin of the elephant and the lion used by Śiva stand for the need to curb the mighty pride and the ego. Himālaya—the snow capped mountain represents the white (Pure) serenity and tranquility of the mind, wherein the Lord Śiva dwells, i.e., the Kailāsa. The third eye is known as the *Jñānanetra*, beyond the two mortal eyes and is to emit *Jñānāgni*, to destroy all the dark, evil and wrong attitudes wherever they may be. *Nandī* the bull, stands for the pure (white) steadfast *Dharma*, on which Śiva moves. The *Vibhūti* or *Bhasma* smeared on the forehead by the devotees of Śiva, is symbolic of the death, the leveller, smearing the *Bhaṣma* before commencing any *Pūjā* will facilitate change from our immediate worldly attitude, to higher thoughts, to attain *Citta Śuddhi* necessary for *Śiva Pūjā*. The dance of Śiva is symbolic of the primordial planets going round the universe, in a rhythmic order and also symbolises the ecstasy of Śiva in transcendental Bliss.

The real meaning and significance of Śiva is however beyond one's comprehension, and can be known only with the grace of Śiva. It should, therefore be our endeavour to seek in all humility, the grace of Lord Śiva, the Infinite Divinity, for granting us the Divine Vision, to Realise Him.



Efficacy of Rāma Nāma

—N. Rajagopalan

If Bharata has excelled in anything and inscribed its name proudly in the gorgeous pages of the history of the world, the prime claim to it emanates from its unique and unequalled exploration and creditable attainments in unravelling the mysteries of the 'Self', the 'Soul' and the aftermath of death'. Few nations have enriched their spiritual and philosophical lore and health to the extent Bharat has done.

Nāma Japa and *Nāma Saṅkīrtana* enticed the attention of sages and seers and the common folks so passionately that the entire nation dedicated its heart and soul to the allied twin observances and adhered to them with unswerving fidelity. Lamenting on the massive destruction and desolation wars and international strifes had wrought, Mahātmā Gāndhī said—

"Such is the bankruptcy of military power. I have not the slightest hesitation in asserting that the power exerted by *Rāma Dhuna* sung by millions of men and women with proper beat of time (*Laya*), is different in kind from what a military tune produces. Chanting *Rāma Dhuna* is infinitely superior. Mass recital of God's name from the heart confers lasting peace and happiness and not the desolation one witnesses."

The emotional faith of Gāndhījī in *Rāma Dhuna* found full play and irrefutable practice during his historic fast in September 1947. Dr. Dinśaw K. Mehtā and Dr. M. D. D. Gilder were anxious about his capability to withstand the

impact of the fast and expressed apprehensions. Gāndhījī merely smiled broadly and tolerantly and raised both hands with finger pointing roofwards—to gesture that he was in the hands of the Greatest Healer! He told them—

“I am not at all anxious to terminate my fast. At this rate, though the body might become weaker and weaker, I feel I could go on even for one month....I have a feeling of the presence of God within me this time as I have never before had. If *Rāma Nāma* has fully penetrated my heart, I am sure that I shall not need even water to survive.”

That was at once the magnitude of the virtue and indefatigable faith in *Rāma Nāma*. Actually he was suffering then from severe stresses, influenza and cough but rejected the plea to take penicillin or any other drug declaring unequivocally—“*Rāma Nāma* is my penicillin. I would rather prefer to become a victim to the experiment with the Lord’s *Nāma* as medicine. Science has much to learn. When *Rāma Nāma* holds full sway, sin is expiated and all illness vanish! I assure you, people have no idea of the full potency of *Rāma Nāma*. I am determined to demonstrate it is my life. I have plunged into this fire to discover the Science of *Rāma Nāma*. I must discover the science of the Holy name or I perish in the attempt!”

That was the himalayan faith and reaction of determined Gāndhījī to the genuine pleas of a devoted band of selfless and respected doctors, etc. Nothing daunted his spirit and the continued fast and attendant suffering and ill-health failed to dislodge him from the pedestal of supreme faith. And he clarified, “The effect of fasting must depend upon the outer and inner purity of the fasting person and the accuracy of his perception.”

It is relevant to notice here how he applied his theory in respect of others he loved. What he did was not a mere ‘boundary’ but a hefty ‘sixer’ to borrow a term from cricket.

Manu Gāndhī had broken a bone. Doctors were to take up surgery. But Gāndhījī said he was sure that *Rāma Nāma* would suffice!

“Bāpū, can it mend a broken bone?”

Not only can *Rāma Nāma* mend the bone; it can do much, much more, if only one attunes oneself! A completely well-attuned person will have rock-sure faith that he would get well; or even if crippled, that he would serve as a more effective instrument for the execution of God’s purpose than many who are not crippled. That after all, is the *summum bonum* of the faithful persons’ life.”

On October 18, 1947 he wrote, “My cough is almost cured. I am more and more inclined towards relying on *Rāma*. “The magic worked. People saw his health was getting better and the cough becoming amenable entirely through his incessant chanting of *Rāma Nāma*!” Whenever Suśīlā Nayyar, his doctor, or any other looked at him reproachfully as he coughed, he would just smile in return and point to his rosary. Though he suffered for long, he demonstrated that *Rāma Nāma* was an unfailing, infallible panacea.



Prayer, *Japa*, meditation, study of philosophical books, pure food, enquiry and *Satsaṅga* will purify your mind and eradicate ignoble and wicked thoughts. Observe the vow of silence: you will then be able to control your speech. Practise *Yama* and *Niyama*. Develop *Sāttvika* qualities. Slowly eradicate negative qualities. By these practices you will not be able to do any wrong action. The force of *Sāttvika* habits will goad you on to do virtuous actions only.

—Swami Sivananda

The Tārā Mahāvidyā

—Dr. M. L. Khaddar Shastri

Appearing in the ten different forms, the *Ādi Śakti* or the divine primeval force blocked the paths leading to all the ten directions and thus denied passage to Śiva who was highly agitated due to *Dakṣa Yajña* episode and had set himself out on a spree to decimate the whole creation. These ten forms of the *Ādi Śakti* or the divine primeval force are known as the *Daśa Mahāvidyā* or the ten supreme treasure of knowledge of the divine, named sequentially as the Kālī, the Tārā, the Tripura Sundarī, the Bhuvaneśvarī, the Bhairavī, the Chinnamastā, the Dhūmāvatī, the Vagālā, the Mātāṅgī and the Kamalā. The *Tārā Mahāvidyā* is placed second in the above order of the ten forms of the *Ādi Śakti*.

Tarati Anayā Sā Tārā defines the Tārā as the one who takes Her devotees across the worldly ocean. She is the one who protects her devotees from the *Tāpa-Traya* or the misery-trio, named *Daihika* (relating to the body), *Daivika* (relating to heaven and destiny) and *Bhautika* (relating to physical world). The Tārā, the most benevolent mother of the universe liberates the constantly distressed souls or the *Jīvas* who keep on wandering in many different *Yonis* or life forms passing through the cycles of birth and death. This is how she is known as the *Tārā* or the liberator of souls among the *Sādhakas* or aspirants of the *Tārā* cult.

The Tārā is the presiding deity of speech and is the sun-incarnate. Topping the list of Her devotees is the great sage Vasiṣṭha who baptized and trained Śrī Rāma into the Tārā

cult. It is only due to the grace of the *Tārā Mahāvidyā* that the sage *Vyāsa Muni* could work on and complete his books. For the firewood of ignorance of the *Jīva* or souls, this *Mahāvidyā* is like the fire that lits and burns it. Thus the aspirants of the *Tārā* cult get success in realizing all the four *Puruṣārthas* namely *Dharma* (obligations), *Artha* (wealth), *Kāma* (desires) and *Mokṣa* (salvation) without making any special effort to achieve them. The *Sādhaka* of the *Tārā* cult becomes well accomplished in the art of poetry and reels out verses like the flow of the river Gaṅgā. The *Sādhaka* becomes capable of charming and captivating kings and during debate in the gathering of knowledgeable he can put the speech of the contestant on the hold (*Stambhana*). Many unique magical supernatural powers take root in the *Sādhakas* of the *Tārā* cult. Mere initiation into Her *Mantra* makes the *Sādhaka* omniscient.

The *Tārā* is away from the *Prapañca* or *Māyā* or the realm of relativity and is also within it because it is Her creation. She is known as *Parāvāk* or the primeval speech. She is *Pūrṇāhantā* or the absolute also. She is the provider of both *Bhoga* or the materialistic bliss and the *Mokṣa* or the Salvation. Her *Bīja Mantra* or the phonetic seed word is *Strīm*. The *Tāntrika* literature describes three manifestations of the *Tārā* namely, *Eka Jātā*, *Ugra Tārā* and *Nīla Saraswatī*. Because She provides *Kaivalya* or unity with the Absolute, She is called *Eka Jātā*. Because she provides *Sādhakas* relief from acute miseries and takes them across the worldly ocean, She is known as *Ugra Tārā*. Because she imparts *Jñāna* or knowledge with ease, she is known as *Nīla Saraswatī*.

The *Tārā* is synonymous with *Omkāra*. The force behind 'Tar' is *Tārā*. She is also known as *Akṣara* or the non-destructible. The *Omkāra* has five components namely *A, U, M, Nāda* and *Bindu*. The *Mantra* propitiating *Tārā* also has five *Bījas* or phonetic seed words. Her companion is

Akṣobhya, the Śiva who did not grimace while drinking *Hālāhala* or the lethal poison.

The visionary of the *Mantra* propitiating the Tārā is *Akṣobhya Ṛṣi*. The *Mantra* is metered in the *Brihatī Chanda*. Its presiding deity is Śrī Tārā Devatā. Its *Bīja* is *Hūm* and *Phaṭ*, the force behind it. The remaining alphabets are the *Kīlaka* or the nails. The *Viniyoga* is linked to the achievement of the four *Puruṣārthas* viz., *Artha*, *Dharma*, *Kāma* and *Mokṣa*. According to another school of *Tantra*, 'Hrīm' is the *Bīja*, 'Hrūm' the *Śakti* and 'Strīm', the *Kīlaka*. After doing *Ṣaḍaṅga Nyāsa* with *Ṣad Dṛga Māyā Bīja* (*Hrīm*), the *Sādhaka* should concentrate according to the *Bhāva* or feelings expressed in the following verse—

प्रत्यालीढपदार्पिताङ्घ्रिशवहृद्घोराट्टहासा परा ।
 खड्गेन्दीवरकर्तृखर्परभुजाहूँकार बीजोद्धवा ॥
 खर्वा नीलविशालपिङ्गलजटाजूटकनागैर्युता ।
 जाड्यं न्यस्य कपालकर्तृजगतां हन्त्युग्रतरा स्वयम् ॥

The above verse describes the posture of the Tārā. She is standing upon the dead body of the Śiva with a peal of loud laughter and with one leg towards the front and the other towards the back position. She has in Her four hands *Khaḍga* (sword), *Indīvara* (lotus), *Kartrika* (shear) and *Khappara* (human skull). She is short statured and of blue complexion. She has snakes rolled up in Her bunshaped hairdo. She is ever ready to remove the darkness of ignorance and passiveness of Her worshippers.

Easy Way of Mantra Siddhi—

To achieve the *Sādhya*, *Siddhi* or the ultimate goal through *Sāadhanā* or practice is the target of all the *Sāadhanā* systems. In the *Tantra Śāstra* or *Tāntrika* literature several easy ways to achieve the target have been described. One of these is the *Grahaṇa Puraścaraṇa* or *Mantra Japa* (recital of *Mantra*) during solar and lunar eclipses, as it is

easier to enliven the *Mantra* during this period. My most revered *Guru Ananta Śrī Vibhūṣita Rāṣṭra Guru, Datia Pītāmbarā Pīṭhādhiśwara, Śrī Swāmījī Mahārāja* has given the following interpretation of the verse-20 of the *Tārā Karpūra Rāja Stotra*—

तमोग्रस्ते चन्द्रे यदि जपति लोकः स्तवमनुं ।
 नवम्यां वा मातर्धरणिधरकन्ये वितनुते ॥
 तथा सूर्ये पृथ्वीवलये तिलकः काव्यततिनी ।
 पयोधिः सिद्धीनां भवति भवनं सर्वविदितम् ॥

O, Mother, if the *Sādhaka* chants your *Mantra* on the date of lunar and solar eclipses, then he becomes an expert in writing poetry and also becomes capable of mastering all the *Siddhis* or aquisition of supernatural powers. Hence one should start *Sāadhanā* or practice only after receiving the *Mantra* from a *Guru*.

Who is capable of determining the nature of *Śrī Tārā Mahāvidyā*? Even the minds of the *Brahmā* and other gods get blunted while analysing Her nature and so what to talk of others. Whatsoever has been mentioned about Her in this write up is the result of Her grace and inspiration. At the end of this write up, I pray to the lotus feet of *Bhagavatī Tārīnī* that She may take Her devotees and the nation and the *Dharma* out of the calamity afflicting them and also She may inspire all of us to tread the path of *Kalyāṇa* or benevolence.



You won't find God anywhere unless you find Him within. Find Him within, and you shall find Him without, everywhere. If you find Him in the temple of your soul, you find Him enshrined in all temples and churches, and in all souls.

—Self-Realization

When We Remember Thee

—S. D. Mehra

When darkness abounds,
And calamities surround,
When no one is around,
Then, we think of Thee.

When the purse is light
And nothing looks bright,
Then gripped with a fright,
We think of Thee.

But, when it is all gay,
Then, You are far far away,
Forsaken and forgotten,
Like something ill-gotten.

Is that fair,
Even then You care,
Like a friend in need,
Like a friend indeed,
Like a benevolent friend,
Who would always defend.

You are great my Lord,
Deserving the highest regard.



The Holy Dust

—P. S. Verma

B. Jagadīśa Swarūpa once asked me, "Do you believe that some dust from the feet of Rāma turned a stone into a woman?" I said—"It is not a question of belief, it happened before my very eyes," He said—"How?" I said that in that life I was a rabbit nibbling a blade of grass when this happened. He laughed. People do not believe that a little dust from the feet of Rāma would turn a piece of stone into a woman. I believe it.

The reason for this belief is that I have blind faith in Tulasīdāsa. When he says that it happened, I have no reason to disbelieve. Tulasī says that this fact was known even to the women in Janakpur. When Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa were roaming the streets of Janakpur, the women saw them and made remarks. One set of women said—

सखि इन्ह कहँ कोउ कोउ अस कहहीं। बड़ प्रभाउ देखत लघु अहहीं॥
परसि जासु पद पंकज धूरी। तरी अहल्या कृत अघ भूरी॥
सो कि रहिहि बिनु सिव धनु तोरें। यह प्रतीति परिहरिअ न भोरें॥

(*Mānasa* I. 222.4—6)

The news reached the palaces of Ayodhya also. The mothers were very happy that their sons had come with their wives and said—

मुनि तिय तरी लगत पग धूरी। कीरति रही भुवन भरि पूरी॥

(*Mānasa* I. 356.3)

Even in remote corners of the kingdom the fact was known. It was for this reason that the boatman in Shringverpur refused to take Rāma across Gaṅgā as he feared that by

a touch of the dust from Rāma's feet, his boat would turn into an ascetic's wife. He asked Rāma to permit him to wash His feet, to which Rāma had to agree. Still not quite sure, he decided to test with a wooden dish. When he saw that by the touch of Rāma's feet, the wooden dish did not turn into a woman, he took Rāma on his boat across Gaṅgā.

Tulasī says that the fact of a stone turning into a woman was known to even the ascetics living in the hills of Vindhyachala. He writes in *Kavitāvalī*—

बिंधिके बासी उदासी तपी ब्रतधारी महा बिनु नारि दुखारे।
गौतमतीय तरी 'तुलसी' सो कथा सुनि भे मुनिबृंद सुखारे॥
हैंहैं सिला सब चंदमुखीं परसें पद मंजुल कंज तिहारे।
कीन्ही भली रघुनायकजु ! करुना करि काननको पगु धारे॥

(*Ayodhyā Kāṇḍa* 28)

The ascetics who were living in the jungles without any women were very pleased to hear that Rāma was coming to the forests. They had heard that by a touch of his feet Gautama's wife turned into a woman from a stone. They were hopeful, that stones on the hill would turn into women and would thus end their boredom. They were however disappointed as not even one stone turned into a woman.

Rāma travelled from Ayodhya to Viśwāmitra's *Āśrama* and then from there to Janakpur, and again from Ayodhya to Shringverpur, Chitrakut and then to all the places till he killed Rāvaṇa. He must have shed tones of dust from His feet, but not one stone turned into a woman. What happened to magical powers of the dust from His feet?

The answer is that only that stone could turn into a woman which was a woman earlier. Let us ponder and find out more facts.

Gautama was an ascetic who was also a philosopher. In Indian philosophy there were six schools. One of them is *Nyāya* which was propounded by Gautama. His wife

Ahalyā was exceedingly beautiful. Gautama had little time for her. Indra king of gods had an evil eye on her. On one occasion when Gautama had gone for a bath in the river in the early hours of the morning, Indra assumed the appearance of Gautama and went to Ahalyā. Ahalyā thought the person approaching her was Gautama, surrendered to Indra. When Indra was coming out of the hut, Gautama returned and saw his own appearance standing before him. By this time Ahalyā too had come out, and was astonished to see two Gautamas standing before her. Gautama saw through the game and cursed Indra as well as Ahalyā. Ahalyā was cursed to become stone. Then Gautama reflected and concluded that Ahalyā was innocent and had been deceived. The curse was however one sided. He said that when Rāma exonerated her, he would accept her as his wife. It was thereafter that Ahalyā remained in the *Āśrama*, abandoned by the inmates, and she suffered the hot winds of summer, the chilly weather of cold and torrential rains like a stone.

Rāma heard the whole story from Viśwāmitra and held that Ahalyā had been wronged, and was not given justice. He rightly thought that if a woman is forcibly abducted and ill treated against her will, she was as pure as any other woman. She Should get her rightful place in the society. Thus Ahalyā was given her rightful place by the side of her husband Gautama. From stone like life she got human life.

Rāma is our ideal for many reasons, but in particular He will be remembered for His benevolent approach towards the women. He not only restored the lost prestige of Ahalyā, He Similarly restored Rūmā wife of Sugrīva whom Bālī had forcibly included in his harem. On the death of Bālī he restored Rūmā's position as the queen of Sugrīva.

But the main question "Can a stone turn into a human-being by mere touch of holy feet" remains to be answered.

The answer is 'Yes'. By stone we should not presume a stone physically. We know that some people are stone hearted. Such was Aṅgulimāla. Aṅgulimāla was a pious soul learning at the feet of a *Guru*. He was poor. When the education ended, he asked his *Guru* what *Dakṣiṇā* he had to give. *Guru* looking at his weak financial background, said that he need not pay anything. Aṅgulimāla insisted which annoyed his *Guru*. In a fit of rage, *Guru* said that Aṅgulimāla may bring a garland of fingers of 108 persons. From that date Aṅgulimāla started killing men, and collected 107 fingers. Buddha was told of the evil activities of Aṅgulimāla. Buddha went to the jungle. Aṅgulimāla was pleased that his 108th victim had come. He rushed to Buddha, but by the touch of the great soul, Aṅgulimāla was so much changed that when he was stoned while begging in the city, he did not raise his little finger even.

Some months back, I read in *Kalyāṇa* that a particular condemned prisoner changed similarly. He was sentenced to death on account of the murder of a person. Before the crucial date, he was allowed to meet some of his colleagues. He asked his colleagues to kill who had deposed against him and was the cause of his fate. After the colleagues had departed, a social worker met him and said, "Brother, after all you had committed murder for which you are getting punishment, but now you are starting a new chain of vices. The person whom you want to be killed had spoken only the truth. Why should you punish him for speaking the truth." The man was so impressed that he called his colleagues, and asked them not to take any action. Next date, the person was hanged.

He resides in all hearts, but He manifests Himself in hearts which are pure and always eager to help the helpless. A contact with such persons turns stones into human beings. Only such persons have what we call 'Healing Touch'.



The Gītā Way to Fight Corruption

—Dr. P. P. Sharma

Corruption in one form or another is rampant in every walk of life today in our country. It is, instead of diminishing, assuming ever more alarming proportions with each passing day. The most distressing feature of our national life is that people in general have got so used to it that they tend to take a very casual and indifferent attitude towards any new manifestation of it. Where will this downward slide in our morals and values stop? People have learnt to take it lightly with the result that if you express your concern and anxiety about it in ordinary conversation you are bound to be scoffed at and dubbed a bore. But should this fear act as a deterrent and prevent us from talking about it? How else can this rot which is constantly eating into the vitals of our culture and civilization be ever arrested?

In times of confusion and chaos it would be a salutary exercise to turn to our sacred and immemorial scriptures for guidance. The *Gītā* has been extensively commented upon from various angles. Would it not be worth our while to try to find out in this divine text how this growing menace can be combated and conquered?

A wrong notion prevails among us in regard to work. Every so-called "intelligent man wants to do as little work as possible and get the maximum reward for it. The top priority of course, is given to no work with plenty of remuneration. A man takes pride in declaring that he gets so much for doing so little. A sinecure is regarded as a

matter of rare good luck. Then there is a whole army of parasites, hangers on cheats, swindlers and can men who manage to live on the toil of others. The *Gītā* gives a clear message in this connection.

नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वं कर्म ज्यायो ह्यकर्मणः ।
शरीरयात्रापि च ते न प्रसिद्ध्येदकर्मणः ॥

(III. 8)

Perform actions approved by the *Śāstras* as action is better than no action. Even maintenance of life will not be possible through no action. If so much significance inheres in action a little more elucidation of action is called for. The next *Śloka* just does this:

यज्ञार्थात्कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽयं कर्मबन्धनः ।
तदर्थं कर्म कौन्तेय मुक्तसङ्गः समाचर ॥

(III. 9)

All action except that which is directed towards the good of others forges shackles to bind us. Disengaged from attachment one should embark on it.

The simple question to ask here is: how many of us are even theoretically familiar with this lofty principle, not to speak of putting it into effect? The devil has supplied us with a contrary gospel: if you can get by without lifting your little finger so much the better. Everybody is for himself, devising ingenious ways to sponge on and exploit others. Our whole economic structure is tacitly based on such a diabolical belief. The right action is just the other way round.

यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।
यत्तपस्यासि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥

(IX. 27)

The Lord exhorts Arjuna to dedicate to Him all action, all that he eats, all his sacrifice, all his charity and austerity.

In today's idiom it would simply mean that all one's various activities should be oriented to the service of the Lord, or the living creatures who are His palpable form. The teaching embodied here would certainly be described as unrealizable even in the best of times, under the most auspicious aegis. A modest effort, however, in this direction should not be dismissed as the Lord assures us:

नेहाभिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रत्यवायो न विद्यते ।
स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् ॥

(II. 40)

If a beginning is made, it will not go waste. Moreover, no opposite effect will ensue. Even a modicum of this religion will save you from the great fear (of being born and dying over and over again).

A great deal of corruption that is flourishing in our midst undoubtedly originates in our preoccupation with material objects. We witness a mad rush for sensual pleasures which through a series of decents land us into ruination:

ध्यायतो विषयान्पुंसः सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते ।
सङ्गात्सञ्जायते कामः कामात्क्रोधोऽभिजायते ॥
क्रोधाद्भवति सम्मोहः सम्मोहात्स्मृतिविभ्रमः ।
स्मृतिभ्रंशाद् बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात्प्रणश्यति ॥

(II. 62-63)

Contemplating the objects of senses, one develops attachment; from attachment grows desire which when frustrated leads to anger; out of anger issues forth delusion; delusion gives birth to loss of memory; from loss of memory comes loss of intellect and thus one perishes in the end. What a depressing scenario today—large multitudes of men and women plummeting into this abysmal depth of self-destruction.

We are all in varying degrees responsible for the corruption that has engulfed us. It must, however, be admitted, that the

greatest blame has to be laid at the door of those who are at the helm of affairs in our present situation. They are, not to mince words, our political leaders and beaurocrats. They set up the standards and the unthinking masses follow them. This truth the Lord states in clear terms—

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।
स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥

(III. 21)

Men in high places are so steeped in corruption at present that common people have no qualms of conscience following their example. The country is today enveloped in a miasma of degeneracy and perversion.

The root cause of corruption is an inordinate and uncontrollable desire to make money by hook or by crook. To make a fast buck is the only religion they follow. Those on the lower rung of the economic ladder want to climb higher to catch up with the affluent while the latter are planning to touch the sky. So the newspapers are replete with the sordid details of all kinds of scams and scandals and nefarious transactions. Nobody feels ashamed when caught in shady deals involving crores of rupees. Our values have in fact become so distorted that unless you are charged with some grave financial offence you are not reckoned among the VIPs. How they keep them cool, their minds absolutely unruffled, when they are under a cloud, is indeed a phenomenon that was not familiar until a few decades ago.

The choice of a vocation is largely determined by the dividends that it promises. In public life as well as in the university campuses this trend is ubiquitously noticed. What happens when young men with no attitude for engineering or medicine opt to become engineers and physicians and surgeons ? They work havoc wherever they go. Far from increasing production or curing ailments they have their eye on the main chance, their ambition to amass huge fortune.

No sooner are the bridges, roads and dams constructed are they seen with yawning cracks. If they had entered their correct profession such disasters would possibly have not occurred. The *Gītā* asks us to stick to a calling which accords with or is in tune with our nature although it may be found fault with or not rated high by others.

सहजं कर्म कौन्तेय सदोषमपि न त्यजेत् ।
सर्वारम्भा हि दोषेण धूमेनाग्निरिवावृताः ॥

(XVIII. 48)

The joy and satisfaction that one derives from work which agrees with his innate nature will be great rewards in themselves. The Lord further explains why it is so:

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।
स्वभावनियतं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्रोपि किल्बिषम् ॥

(XVIII. 47)

What needs to be understood here is that one is born with certain traits and characteristics, *Samskāras* to use the term used often in this context and a person would be better off taking up a profession which goes along with them. If we are really committed to the belief that all work is noble we won't be silly to distinguish between one work and another. One's own calling even if be devoid of merit is superior to the well performed one of another because if one follows his natural inclination, he incurs no sin, he never goes wrong. Among our medieval saint poets there were cobblers, weavers, barbers, butchers, maid. servants; they were perfectly happy doing their humdrum jobs. In modern times the philosophy of egalitarianism has upset the long-established scheme driving people into unaccustomed pathways. The result is unappeased hunger for money and life long dissatisfaction and frustration. Those who superstitiously cling to the hierarchical notion about work would do well to ponder in what sense the feet are less important than the

head. Can anyone walk on his head? Not even an expert acrobat can. Engaged in his own work (without caring for anybody else's or comparing his own with that of another) one achieves the highest success, the pinnacle of self fulfilment. (XVIII. 45). For worshipping the Lord it is not necessary to go to a place of pilgrimage or even to enter a temple. What Śrī Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna, deserves to be listened to by our 'secular' friends:

यतः प्रवृत्तिर्भूतानां येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।
स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः ॥

(XVIII. 46)

Adore the Lord, all pervasive and every creature's matrix and origin, through your work and attain salvation. If only our *Bābūs* in offices, teachers in schools and colleges, doctors in hospitals and elected members in legislature, engineers at their construction sites, and also the humble and the downtrodden toiling in their respective areas would carry this message into their daily chores everything would be alright with the world.

If man has fallen today he certainly can rise tomorrow through appropriate effort. Ensnared in corruption he is showing his unseemly side. He has, however, abundant potential for growth. Don't we sometimes act without any selfish motive? A blind man is led across a busy street; a stranger is given useful direction to reach a certain place in the city, an anonymous donation is sent to a charitable institution; blood is offered to help an unknown patient. If such activities increase, and there is no reason why they should not, the dragon of corruption that stares us in the face today will be trampled upon and subdued. The Lord's inspiring words should continually reverberate in our ears.

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥

(II. 47)

You have right to action but not to fruit thereof. Neither avoid action, nor look for result. If the individual raises himself by assimilating and acting upon some of these instructions contained in the *Gītā*, the mores and morals of the whole society and eventually of the nation will automatically improve. The initiative, however, should come from the enlightened few. The character of the totality (समष्टि) is determined by that of the minority (व्यष्टि).



We have to gradually develop universal love through selfless service, *Satsaṅga* with *Mahātmās*, prayer, recitation of *Guru Mantras*, etc. When the heart is contracted through selfishness in the beginning, man loves only his wife, children, a few friends and relatives. As he evolves he loves the people of his own district, then the people of his own province. Later on he develops love for men of his own country. Eventually he begins to love other people of different countries. In the long run he begins to love all. He develops universal love. All the barriers are broken asunder; heart has expanded to infinity.

—Swami Sivananda

One very important point for promoting positive thoughts is to create a mental environment that is free from stress. The mind is pressured by stress, tension; worry, fear, apprehension and the notion that something wrong may happen. If these invade your mind, positive thinking cannot be possible. The mind must be relaxed and free of these burdens.

—Swami Jyotirmayananda

Impact of Science on Hindu Religion

Holy Cow

—A. P. Ananda

In Hindu Religion cow is given the status of a mother and is called *Go Mātā*. Since cow is very useful in many respects it is considered a sacred animal or say it is glossed to divinity. The cow therapy is mentioned in *Vedas*. In earlier days, without reference to cow, no function or ceremony was ever performed.

Cow is manure producing animal for organic farming and its dung is air purifier and making environment friendly. The cow dung when burnt kills / drives away the mosquitoes and many small insects as it contains many antiseptic properties. The Hindus while carrying the bier to the pyre in the crematorium in funeral procession carry an earthen pot containing smoke emitting from dung cake to drive away and destroy the germs surrounding the dead body. *Gobara* and cow urine in combination with certain herbal medicines can be used to get rid of cockroaches, bacteria, bugs and insects in the houses and farms. In the olden days and even nowadays in the villages the floors and walls of the houses are given wash with cow dung almost everyday as it acts as a repellent to insects. The cow dung when used as a fertilizer in the fields reduces the water requirement to 60% in comparison to chemical fertilizers. The cow urine and dung have immense potential as manure. Its use should be promoted to protect the soil from developing 'fatigue' which is caused by the excessive use of pesticides, chemicals and fertilizers. Cow's urine is an antidote to poisonous effects

and is used for many skin, eye and other diseases. The bio-gas produced from cow dung is cheap enough to use as fuel and electricity in the villages.

Cow's milk, its milk products and ghee are enriched with many vitamins, especially vitamin A. The consumption of these products can reduce acidity and ulcers. It contains carbohydrates and is easily digestible. The use also drives away communicable diseases and virus fevers. It is also useful for cardiac ailments. We mainly get five items from cows i.e., milk, ghee, curd, *Gomūtra* (urine) and dung. The use of curd prevents delivery of unhealthy and retarded babies. It also helps our digestive system. Cow's ghee is a rich source of nutrients and is very useful for the whole body. It combats the infectious diseases. It is equally good for brain and vision.

It is believed that when one big spoon of cow ghee is put into fire it releases a huge quantity of oxygen which is very useful for the environment.

The regular use of cow ghee in the nostrils keeps our brain cells lubricated enhancing our memory, reducing many breathing problems and helps to improve the quality of sleep. Cow's ghee does not increase cholesterol level.

Slaughtering of cow for food is not only inhuman but inauspicious also and thus the Hindus strictly abhor this practice.



The *Ātman* is the hidden Self in man. And turning away from the *Ātman*, man wanders, from unrest to unrest, in hot pursuit of shadow-shapes that come and go. Man's life on earth is an aimless wandering until he learns to look within himself and makes the greatest discovery of his life—the discovery of the *Ātman*.

—J. P. Vaswani

Pilgrimage to Śrī Badrīviśāla the Sacred Seat of Badrinath

—Somanath Jena

Four sacred *Dhāmas* are located in the sacred mountain, the Himalayas, these are—(1) Badrinath (2) Kedar Nath, (3) Yamunotri and (4) Gangotri. Of these Badrinath comes first. Lord in the form of *Nara-Nārāyaṇa* is engaged constantly in meditation in the sacred seat of Badrika Dham praying for the peace and prosperity and happiness of the world. Here, Nara Nārāyaṇa is in *Dhyānamudrā* constantly in meditation contemplating self. This seat of pilgrimage is considered one of the places for Hindus who believe by stepping foot on it, they attain salvation from the worldly bondage and are free from future birth. The sacred river Alakanandā, one of the tributes of the sacred Gaṅgā is flowing out of the water, formed due to melting of snow which has covered Nara-Nārāyaṇa hill. The flow of water of Alakanandā resounds the chanting of *Hara-Hara* constantly ushering in the purity and peace of the world. The devotees in large number tread the sacred *Dhāma* with the purpose of taking holy bath in the river Alakanandā which is a very pleasant and sanctified bath in the hot *Kuṇḍa* and to worship the Lord Nārāyaṇa as well as to offer oblation *Śrāddha* in *Brahma Kapālī* praying for ancestors' salvation and peace of the departed soul. For that purpose, they also offer water. They take the opportunity of visiting Vyāsa cave and other sanctified place lyings 3-4 Kms. in the up-hills behind the Baidyanātha, passed through narrow snow-covered path by climbing stiff hills. They also undertake

a lot of trouble and pain for the walk.

In every year, the temple opens after the inaugural worship on the day of sacred *Akṣaya Tṛtīyā*. The devotees start visiting the temple which is kept open from *Akṣaya Tṛtīyā* till the day of *Kālī Pūjā*. On the day of *Kālī Pūjā*, the temple remains closed after the last *Pūjā* in a ceremonial manner is conducted. The door is closed. The road to Badrinath from Joshi Matha onwards remains closed for devotees after *Kālī Pūjā* till the previous day of *Akṣaya Tṛtīyā*. One will look a strange thing that the lamp is burning within the closed temple from the day of *Kālī Pūjā* till *Akṣaya Tṛtīyā*, without being taken care by anyone during this period. This is one of the miracles. No human priest worships and has got any opportunity and chance to visit inside the temple during the period of closure. But it is said that during this period, with the help of Nārada Ṛṣi, gods worship Lord Nara-Nārāyaṇa. This is the *Paurāṇika* story.

For the Gods and Brahmins, the *Pañcarātra Pūjā* has been prescribed, but for others the visit to Badrinath, to remember and to meditate Him yields the same merit as is gained by *Pāñcarātra Pūjā*.

To approach this place, the travel agencies take luxury buses from Delhi, Haridwar and Rishikesh. But the buses being run by Gharwal Vikāsa Maṇḍala Nigama (GMU) are safe and also cheap and also are punctual. These buses leave Haridwar at 3.00 AM and take about 14 hours to reach Badrinath Dhāma via Joshi Matha. The pilgrims have to take blankets, necessary medicines, winter garments, woolen cap, woolen gloves, woolen socks etc., and a torch light, umbrella, thurmos flask to carry hot water to avoid congestion in throat. On the way, there are a number of halting places where buses halt for sometime for tiffin, snacks, meals and bath. These places have *Dharmaśālās*, hotels, rest-sheds of *Garhwāla Vikāsa Maṇḍala Nigama*,

Pānthaśālās of Tourism Department and Dharmaśālās of Kālī Kamlīwālā Trust. Medicines, fruits are also available.

The buses pass through Rishikesh via Muni-kī-retī through narrow roads over the stiff hills having frequent bends on the hill top. One has to cross numerous rivers, streams from one side to other just jumping like wild monkeys. Varieties of *Jhūlās*, bridges one has to witness on the way. In both sides, various species of trees one can see. The head will reel if somebody looks below the road while passing on the road in the deep depth. At every time, one will feel helplessness. He may apprehend fall of the vehicle or land slide or slide of melting blocks of ice, erosion of soil. These are the uncertainties which are probable at any time. The distance from Haridwar to Badrinath is about 322 Kms., and from Rishikesh it is about 300 Kms. For the bus, leaving at 3.30 AM and 4.30 AM one has to book tickets one day ahead to be sure of the seat. On the way from Haridwar to Badrinath one can cross the following sacred places—

(1) Deva Prayag, (2) Rudra Prayag (3) Karna Prayag (4) Nanda Prayag and (5) Vishnu Prayag. The holy stream Mandākinī has come from the sacred Kedarnath. Alakananda has come from Badrinath, Bhāgīrathī has come from Gangotri. Prior to come from Gangotri, the stream originates from the drops of melting ice from Gomukha which is about 18 Kms., away from Gangotri. The river Yamunā has originated from Yamunotri. The Yamunotri will not come on this way. The river Yamunā coming from Yamunotri has fallen in confluence with Gaṅgā and Saraswatī at Triveni, Allahabad.

The height of the Badrinath temple is located 10,300 feet from the sea level. Due to location in the high altitude and covering of the mountain with snow and ice and due to blowing of wind through the icy mountains and stream

it is awfully cold and chilly. But it is a mystery of the nature that just below the temple there is a well at a distance of about 30 feet from Alakananda carrying chilly water which is a hot stream. The water is tolerably hot and very pleasant to take bath. At the initial stage, when somebody enters into he feels some irritation and when he enters fully for dip he will not feel to come out.

Near Badrinath, there is a cantonment of Defence Department. This looks after alongwith the Border Road Organization law and Order and safety of the road. So there is less difficulty.

Kedarnath Dhama is about 10 Kms., from Badrinath. If somebody passes through, the hilly roads which were being used by the local persons. This road runs through icy hills. People used to tread this path, but on inquiry I found that this road has been blocked and became unaccessible by coverage of ice-blocks coming from Nīlakanṭheśwara Valley in Kanchan Jungha. At present, the pilgrims have to go to Kedaranath from Rudra Prayag via Gouri Kunda. To go to Gangotri and Yamunotri, one has to go from Chameli via Uttar Kashi. In Rudraprayag, and Srinagar Chameli there are accommodation facilities in hotels, *Dharmaśālās*. The vehicles and buses pass through roads from sun-rise to sun-set. No vehicle is allowed beyond sun-set till sun rise to pass the roads.

It has been described in *Purāṇa* that creator Nārāyaṇa was asleep in the ocean of milk over the hood of Śeṣa in *Yoganidrā*, Mahālakṣmī was sitting at his feet and rubbing his feet with her hands to relax. The *Devarṣi Nārada* saw this and submitted to Lord that if Lord does like this and engages Himself in spending time in sleep in a company of his wife, then the other worldly people will follow the same and will become idle and waste away their time without doing austerity and meditating over God. The God

realized the point. Lord left Mahālakṣmī with daughters of Nāga in milky-ocean and went on searching a suitable place for meditation. Ultimately, he could locate the hill *Nara-Nārāyaṇa*, situated in Kedar Khanda field of Himalaya. In that place, Lord Śiva with his divine consort Pārvatī was residing in the temple. When both Lord Śiva and Pārvatī were living, once they closed the temple and went out for taking bath in hot stream. At that time, *Nara-Nārāyaṇa* created delusion and formed himself into the shape of a helpless small boy and started crying in front of their closed door being naked and as if he is left helplessly by his parents in midst of cold. Pārvatī being a woman developed compassion and lifted the boy and kept him inside the temple opening the door and then closed the door and went with Lord Śiva for bath in hot-stream. Lord Śiva was omniscient and he knew the *Nara Nārāyaṇa*. So he advised Pārvatī not to lift the boy and keep in the temple. But Pārvatī could not understand. Lord Śiva and Pārvatī after bath tried to open the door of the temple and they saw that the front door of the temple was bolted from inside. In spite of all efforts, they could not open the door and ultimately Lord Śiva disclosed to Pārvatī that this was none but *Nara-Nārāyaṇa* who came to stay there. They left this temple for the residence of *Nara Nārāyaṇa* and *Nārāyaṇa* stayed there in stead of Lord Śiva and Pārvatī. Śiva and Pārvatī went to Kedarnath and stayed there permanently. Still now, one can find the old Kedarnath temple near the hot-stream. In the mean-time, many years passed away, Goddess Lakṣmī went in search of Lord and found him in the place called Badrival. Since then the *Pāñcarātrī Pūjā* worship is being done by the devotees and Gods in Badrinath temple in favour of the Lord Śiva. After meeting with Lord, Mahālakṣmī stayed on the right hand side of Lord in the temple and remained in meditation since *Nara Nārāyaṇa* was in

meditation. Mahā Lakṣmī at the first step was in the form of Badri trees protecting Lord from heat of sun and rain. At that time, there were Badari trees in this area. So this place of Śrīman Nārāyaṇa is called by devotees as Badrivisal Dham. That old idol of Lord was concealed by the priests of the temple for fear of damage by attack of Chinese in the deep depth of river Alakanandā in a place known as Narada Kunda. Then they worshipped Lord in the form of Śālagrāma. But Ādiśaṅkarācārya, the *Avatāra* of Lord Śiva has recovered the original idol of Lord Nara-Nārāyaṇa from Narada Kunda and established the same in the present form in the present temple.

In the temple, devotees find the idol of effulgent Badrīnātha is decorated with costly diamonds. The forehead is adorned with sandal paste, neck with costly garlands and the crown with golden-pot. Though in meditation, still He has kept the request of Mahālakṣmī and remained in *Śṛṅgāramudrā*. Though seated in *Śṛṅgāra* he is in meditation and totally indifferent to sensual pleasure.

Near Lord Nara-Nārāyaṇa the idol of Lakṣmī, Kubera, Nārada, Uddhava are there. The worship starts from 4.00 AM in the morning till 10.00 PM at night. The Nambudlī Brahmins of South India regularly and sincerely worship with offering lamp, correct chanting of *Mantras* and chanting of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* and *Viṣṇu Sahasranāma* and other rituals. The temple is run by trust under the Govt. of Uttar Pradesh. The Trust issues receipts for subscriptions, donations for specific *Pūjā*. One has to go through the Lion gate of the temple to have *Darśana*. Then enters into the Nato Mandira, the middle portion of the temple. There in a queue, devotees one by one can have *Darśana* and have the facility of worship. The walls bear various paintings. The outside walls also bear idols of various deities according to Hindu mythology. One can purchase *Prasādam*. The offerings are

packed by the vendors. The herbal leaves like *Podinā*, *Tulasī*, and various medicinal herbs, various fruits, flowers, sugar-candy are also offered to the deity.

It is believed that religious merits will accrue to the devotees on visiting the sacred *Dhāma*, Badrinath. Apart from this, aurora of divine saints and devotees charging the atmosphere will make contact with the body of other devotees and elevate their mind being charged with purity. This will transform the mind and lead to tranquility. There is no doubt about it. Śrāddha in Brahma Kapālī to the ancestors never fails. It will attribute to the peace of the soul of departed ancestors and lead to their salvation.



'Woman and gold' have drowned the whole world in sin. Woman is disarmed when you view her as the manifestation of the Divine Mother. God cannot be seen so long as one's passion for woman and gold is not extinguished.

—Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna

Europe and America are smitten with luxury. But the soul of India is still radiant with the light of simplicity, purity and love. Today, India too, is passing through a difficult period of her history. Modern nationalism, with its democratic cries of free governments based on party programmes, has seized our soul, and in pursuit of politics and political ends, we have forgotten the great truth taught by the great seers and sages of India, through the centuries, that God must be worshipped through life. Religion cannot be separated from service. To worship God in the right way is to fight injustice, is to protect the weak against the insolence of the autocrat, is to stand up in courage for great human values of life."

—East and West

Śrī Rāma—the Virtuous

—R. Kannan

The great epic *Śrīmad Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇam* starts with the enquiry of Vālmīki with sage Nārada

तपः स्वाध्याय निरतं तपस्वी वाग्विदांवरम्।
नारदं परिप्रच्छ वाल्मीकिर्मुनिपुङ्गवम्॥

When one wants to know about something real and good, he should approach a reliable person who is competent to answer. Here Vālmīki enquires from the celestial sage Nārada, who is also the son of Brahmā and the immortal story of Śrī Rāma begins.

Here Vālmīki requests sage Nārada to let him know whether there is any man (नर) in this world presently who is meritorious and valorous. One who is versatile with duties, having gratitude. One who speaks only truth, steadfast in his vows, one with good character, one who is kind hearted, one who is wise, having unlimited capability and has a handsome personality to attract one and all. One who has mastered his own self and has control over wrath; one who is brilliant (radiating तेजस्) and is free from envy, one who is easily accessible to everyone and whose anger, every *Deva* dreads? He elicits 16 prime qualities, which will make a man of the highest order. For this question, sage Nārada gives a detailed reply, from his personal knowledge.

First he says that the qualities referred to above are very rare in this world and however, these qualities are possessed by Śrī Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, the king of Ayodhya. Getting the brief information about the *Avatāra* of Śrī Rāma

from Nārada and also blessed by Brahmā to have all details about Śrī Rāma's life, Vālmīki writes the *Rāmāyaṇam*. *Śrīmad Rāmāyaṇam* is an epic, depicting the various fine qualities referred to above.

The first question of Vālmīki to sage Nārada is "अस्मिन् सांप्रतं लोके गुणवान् कः" Who in this present world, is possessed of good qualities? The word 'गुणवान्' may denote generally possessed of good qualities. As he enquires about further 15 qualities 'गुणवान्' should be treated as possessed of a special quality. Here, we may note, that Ācārya Ālavaṇḍāra, in his *Stotra Ratna* describes Śrīman Nārāyaṇa as "वशी वदान्यः गुणवान् ऋजुः शुचिः.....समस्त कल्याण गुणामृतोदधिः." Here it may be seen that 'गुणवान्' has been included as a special quality, alongwith other qualities.

Almost all Ācāryas have commented that the quality which has been represented by 'गुणवान्' relates to 'सौशील्यं' **What is Sauśīlayam?—**

'सौशील्यम्.....महतो मन्दैस्सह नीरन्ध्रेण संश्लेषः" A person of high status, mixing up with a person of inferior status, freely without any feeling of superiority—this quality is said to be *Sauśīlyam*. It is very difficult for anyone to forget his egoism and move with anybody particularly with a person of inferior status. That is why, different classes of people exist even in the modern society.

But *Śrīmad Rāmāyaṇa* depicts that Śrī Rāma exhibited this supreme quality of *Sauśīlyam*. We can see various instances in *Śrīmad Rāmāyaṇa*.

In *Ayodhyā Kāṇḍa*, Śrī Rāma reaches Shringaverapur ruled by Guha. Guha is a hunter and a boat man only. He is a cheiftain of a small place, which falls under the regime of Ayodhya. Śrī Rāma the crown prince of Ayodhya is welcomed by Guha, whole heartedly and is offered all facilities available at his control. Śrī Rāma well pleased with the reception, embraces Guha like a very intimate friend.

Here Śrī Rāma forgets his status and the status of Guha and declares him as his close friend (In *Kamba Rāmāyaṇa*, Śrī Rāma declares that they have been only four brothers till then and now they have become five brothers including Guha). One of the Ālwārs, Tirumaṅgai Ālwār, praises this quality of *Sauṣīlyam* of Śrī Rāma to the highest degree. Vālmīki refers Guha as “रामस्यात्मसमस्सखा.”

Next Śrī Rāma goes to the hermitage, where the huntress Śabarī resides. He accepts the hospitality of Śabarī with grace and kindness, though she belongs to a lowly status.

Then Śrī Rāma seeks friendship with the *Vānara* king (monkey king) Sugrīva and the friendship is concluded in front of Agni (fire-god) “अग्निसाक्षीक”. Here Śrī Rāma gives equal status to Sugrīva. In *Kamba Rāmāyaṇa* Śrī Rāma takes him as a brother (stating that they have become six brothers now).

Last but not the least *Rākṣasa*—Vibhīṣaṇa comes to the fold of Śrī Rāma and surrenders at his feet. Though Vibhīṣaṇa is a demon, and brother of Rāvaṇa, who has abducted Sītā Devī. Śrī Rāma grants him refuge and makes him a close associate. Here again *Kamba Rāmāyaṇa* states that Rāma and his family have become seven brothers.

Thus the crown prince of Ayodhya, Śrī Rāma exhibited his *Sauṣīlyam* while making friendship with a hunter, Guha, a monkey Sugrīva and a demon Vibhīṣaṇa. Apart from this he accepted the hospitality of Śabarī, a huntress. This quality of *Sauṣīlyam* of Śrī Rāma has been described as the special quality under the word “गुणवान्”.

There is another explanation of *Guṇavān* (गुणवान्) by another Ācārya Kūrathalvan. First time Rāvaṇa comes to the battlefield and fights with Śrī Rāma. In a fierce battle, Rāvaṇa loses his chariot, bow, arrow, and the crown. He stands alone in the battlefield. A moment is enough for Śrī Rāma to kill Rāvaṇa who is without any protection

whatsoever. But Śrī Rāma, instead of killing Rāvaṇa, who has abducted Sītā Devī and kept her in *Aśoka Vana* for almost a year permits him to go home. “गच्छानुजानामि रणार्दितस्त्वम्”.

Śrī Rāma lets Rāvaṇa go home, in order to think again about the final result of the battle and atone for his sins committed so far. If Rāvaṇa, comes and surrenders, Śrī Rāma is prepared to pardon him and forget all his past deeds.

What is the name of this quality (कोवै गुणः ?) by which Śrī Rāma allows his arch enemy Rāvaṇa, who has separated himself and Sītā Devī for almost a year, to go home from the battlefield without being killed. There is no quality which can be termed better than this act of sympathy and mercy on his arch foe. We have cited only a few examples of Śrī Rāma's qualities which are special in nature as compared to other normal good qualities under the title 'गुणवान्'. Afterall Śrī Rāma has taken the *Avatāra* of a human being to exhibit exemplary qualities by practice.



I was born in a female body, but I find it very difficult to think either as man or as woman, because I know I am the soul, and so are all of you. Genuine equality springs from the soul; that is what we should focus on. In the sight of God, the two sexes are equal; both are needed for life to go on; both possess attributes that are absolutely necessary for us to become balanced human beings. We should cultivate in ourselves a combination of masculine and feminine qualities. We need the tenderness and compassion that tend to be predominant in woman as well as the reason and 'go get them' spirit usually more evident in man.

—Self-Realization

Read and Digest

—Sri Guru Nanak Dev

1. Man's maladies were due to pleasures. The pleasures are the sickness of the soul, and their medicament lies in the courting of pain.

2. Only if I submitted to my Lord's Will, there will be peace for me.

3. Keep thy master in the mind.

4. My first prayer is of truth, the second of honest living, the third of the grace of God, the fourth of a clean mind and the fifth of the remembrance of God.

5. Man, be not clever with thy God.

6. Feeding the hungry and covering the naked brings God's mercy upon the giver, but one must give out of one's honest earnings.

7. He who keeps God in the mind and does right, his soul is ever in peace both here and in the here-after.

8. Make truth, self-restraint and good deeds his lines, and utterance of God's name His ablutions, so that he becomes acceptable to His God.

9. Life and death are in the hands of God. No man can intervene in his mysterious play. It is best to rejoice in whatever comes from him. So long as there's life in man, one prays for the best to one's God. But once he wants to take life, man should submit to his will cheerfully.

Sender—M. L. Chhibber



Maharṣi Aurobindo (The Man and the Mind)

—Dr. Suresh Chandra Pande

Cogito Ergo Sum—is an old adage. It means—‘I feel, I think, so I am’. Neither the *Cogito* nor the *Ergo* but the *Sum* aptly sums up *Maharṣi Aurobindo*’s literary as well as political career. *Aurobindo Ackroyd Ghōṣa*—a prolific genius, the completest synthesis of India, Asia and Europe, who as Romain Rolland has said, like a *Rṣi* holds in firm unrelaxed grip the bow of creative energy; to uninitiated readers is difficult to understand, still more difficult is to write half a hemistich on the life of such a multi-dimensional, multifaceted luminary, whom some mystics, *Yogīs* or divinely graced eyes even of today—can see shining bright in Eastern as well as on Western firmament.

Born on 15th of August 1872 at the residence of Mr. Mana Mohana Ghōṣa at Theatre Road, Calcutta, Śrī Aurobindo was the third child of Dr. Kṛṣṇadhaṇa Ghōṣa and Swarṇa Latā Devī. As an earnest and thoughtful boy with deep wistful eyes looking mystically into futurity Śrī Aurobindo alongwith his two elder brothers was admitted to the Loretto Convent School—an institution meant for European children—at Darjeeling. Hidden somewhere in the core of man’s conscience lies the foreknowledge of a distant future. As such, moving about in the midst of a band of alien boys, gazing at times upon the beautiful face of nature; sweet and gentle of disposition, this pure hearted boy was the glory of the school. In 1879 Dr. and Mrs. Ghōṣa took their children to England to one Mr. W. H. Drewett—an

accomplished scholar in Latin, because parents loved to see their children throughly anglicised in culture, conduct and education. In 1884 when he was about twelve Śrī Aurobindo was admitted to St. Paul's School, London. During his five year's stay at St. Paul he shone as a brilliant student securing top prizes for literature and history. Although Śrī Aurobindo had begun writing poems at an extraordinary tender age while at Manchester his literary activity both creative and academic gathered momentum in London. Much of his writing of this period is lost, but the pieces recovered from Mrs. Drewett reveal a sharp sensibility and a spontaneous and intimate knowledge of prosody. With a scholarship from St. Paul's Śrī Aurobindo went to King's College, Cambridge. It was then the end of the year 1889. Here he bagged all the college prizes in Greek and Latin, passed the classical Tripos in the first division, got himself enrolled due to his father's ardent desire as a candidate for Indian Civil Service. But even after securing high marks in all the papers of the written examination, he felt no call for the I.C.S., so got escaped somehow from this thralldom.

In 1892 he joined in London a secret society named *Lotus and Dagger*'. The members of this society made vows to contribute and work each in his own way to the cause of India's freedom. The Gāekwāra of Baroda—Mahārāja Sayājī Rāo was then on a visit to London. Śrī Aurobindo's well-wisher James Cotton arranged Śrī Aurobindo's appointment in Baroda state service. In early 1893 an overwhelming peace descended on him the moment he landed on the Indian soil at Apollo Bunder—Bombay. It was the first concrete spiritual experience such as a feeling of the infinite pervading material space and the Immanent inhabiting material objects and bodies. Meanwhile his father died of a heart-attack and his mother mentally deranged was staying at Deoghur. He first worked in the Department of

Revenue and Land settlement under Baroda state administration and thereafter joined as the Professor of English at Mahārājā's College. Śrī Aurobindo was a man of unusual industry and capacity. He possessed a knowledge of English Literature that was far beyond the average, wrote much better than most young English men. Besides, it was a treat to hear Śrī Aurobindo on the platform. He was not an orator but a speaker of a very high order and was listened to with rapt attention. Language flowed like a stream from his lips with natural ease and melody that kept the audience spellbound.

By now he was no more in London working for '*Lotus and Dagger*.' He was called back to India by the land of eternal snows, by the Ganges upon whose shores the flowers of Eden blow. Two significant Voyages were working in Śrī Aurobindo—One was from India into the West and the other from the West into India. Thoroughly anglicised in the company of Oscar Wilde and Laurence Binyon due to strange ironies of parental predilections, Śrī Aurobindo was less Indian than Bankima Chandra or Rabindra Nātha Tagore, produced by native Indian School education, wielding with suppleness, grace and power the most dynamic of Indian languages. For such a large nation like India Śrī Aurobindo found the Congress too puny a voice against the sophisticated colonial machinery the British had set up. Soon he began writing articles anonymously in *Indū Prakāśa* of Bombay. Though he wrote in balanced and colourful imagery, his criticism of the congress was sarcastic and slashing. This raised a great hue and cry in the then arm chair world of politics of Mr. M. G. Rāṇāde. The well-known Maharastrian leader asked the proprietors of *Indū Prakāśa* to stop publishing such seditious articles. Śrī Aurobindo too did not feel inspired. There was no joy now in Baroda society. His friends arranged a young Bengali litterateur Dinendra Kumar

Roy to help him master spoken Bengali. Roy's memoirs of his Baroda days not only make an important document but also give glimpses of his mode of living. Śrī Aurobindo, wrote he, was callous towards food and sleep, absorbed in his studies late into the night oblivious of swarms of mosquitoes around him. Besides, he had a normal interest in matters of occult. By now he was not a man of this earth, he was a God come down from heaven perhaps due to some curse. A European mind believing in the Immanence of God was now a being of light not consciously practising *Yoga* but having spiritual experiences time after time. Once on a visit to Śaṅkarācārya hill he experienced the vacant infinite in a very tangible way. He continued his *Sādhana* his *Prāṇāyāma*. As a result underwent an enhanced mental activity, felt electric energy all around the brain and got an increased health. He also experienced a sort of psycho-physical phenomenon. A power of subtle sight was developed in him. Luminous patterns and figures he saw with the waking eye. So he was as it was inevitable in quest of some *Yogīs*. It was a Maharastrian *Yogī* Lele who gave Śrī Aurobindo some concrete help—sit in meditation. Do not think. Look only at your mind till it is capable of entire silence. Śrī Aurobindo's mind was silent like a windless air on a high mountain. Mental being became a free intelligence. He was the master of a vast sight empire and thought empire. By his own quest and inborn sincerity of purpose, he shot into the firmament of consciousness, through layers of experiences like those of *Nirvāṇa* and silence in the *Brahman*, he approached the uncharted areas of realization later at Pondicherry he thoroughly explored and mastered.

After a period of time anti-British spirit was running high. So he began visiting Bengal regularly in order to organize secret revolutionary societies and mobilize the nationalists. For this sake he celebrated marriage with

Mṛṇālinī Devī daughter of Bhūpāla Candra Bose at Calcutta in 1901. In 1905, he resigned from his Baroda job and came to Calcutta as the Principal of National College. It was a college free from the control of the British Indian Government. But he could not stay here for long. Soon, he got invitation from Bipin Candra Pāla to help him launch *Bande Mātaram*. It was a News Paper. Śrī Aurobindo acceded to the proposal and took up editing *Bande Mātaram*. The chaste and powerful prose of *Bande Mātaram* won wonder and admiration even from those who were hostile to it. It was the time of Bengal partition and historically important Surat Congress. Meanwhile the British government brought charges of sedition against the news-paper, but the charges failed. In 1908, he was arrested in connection with the Alipore Conspiracy case. The story of the trial tells us that the Judge who was to chair this trial Mr. Beachcroft was Śrī Aurobindo's colleague at Cambridge. The Alipore trial went on for a year at the end of which in 1909 Śrī Aurobindo got acquitted. The much coveted poems 'Invitation' and 'Who' were also composed inside the jail. As it was a period of hectic literary activity Śrī Aurobindo wrote a long poem in blank verse on a great soul of another category— 'Baji Probhou' that appeared in 1922 from Ārya office Pondicherry. His another poem that delineates a *Mahābhārata* story—Vidulā was first published under the title "The Mother to her Son" in Locksley Hall Metre. In it he makes a mother whose voice is as symbolic as *Durgā Stotra*—Hymn to Durgā.

Śrī Aurobindo for quite sometime now was not formulating his actions through thoughts or calculations. He was solely depending for guidance from Above. One evening early in 1910 he suddenly got an *Ādeśa* to proceed to Chandernagore— a little French pocket not far from Calcutta. A few weeks later the self same voice guided him

to Pondicherry. Śrī Aurobindo now brought out two weeklies—The *Karmayogin* run for sometime by sister Niveditā and the *Dharma* by his lieutenant Nolinī Kānta Gupta. Śrī Aurobindo was by now woken up to the supreme mission of his life—that was to plunge into the depths of spirituality and to invent and establish the principles of *Yoga*. Meanwhile, R. Pālita published his first biography to satisfy the country-wide crying need and C. R. Dāsa and R. N. Tagore saw him engrossed in *Yoga* at Pondicherry. His face, they wrote, was radiant with an inner-light and his serene presence like dynamos filled thousands around him with light, bliss and *Ānanda*. While his speech like the utterance of ancient *Ṛṣi* contained equanimity that gave to his soul its all around freedom. He was truly the master of the word and the world was waiting to him for his message—Hearken to Me. As a matter of fact, people were waiting for the light from Pondicherry and it reached them through *Ārya* a monthly, first published on 15th August 1914. It serialised his major prose works—*The Life Divine*, *The Secret of the Vedas*, *The Essays on the Gītā*, *The Psychology of Social Development*, *The Ideal of Human Unity*, *The Future Poetry*, *In Defence of Indian Culture* and *The Synthesis of Yoga*.

(To be continued)



"Guru Arjan," Dada Vaswani added, "called upon all to sing the Holy Name of God, to abide in the Will of God, to give a helping hand to the weary and the grief-stricken and to walk the way of reconciliation and peace." His emphasis was on service and love for others which expresses itself in self sacrifice.

—East and West

Passing Show

—A *Samnyasi*

Jesus has rightly said, "Let him hear who has ears and let him see who has eyes."

Samnyāsī *Guru* *Dattātreya* had such eyes and ears and so he chose twenty-four *Gurus* from the world shows.

Kaviguru Tagore is another one who had such eyes and ears and so he sang—

तुमि केमन कोरे गान करो जे गुणो ।
आमि अवाक होये शुनि शुधु शुनि ॥

Oh singer how you sing your songs I hear with wonder and wonder." These in fact, relate to the passing shows, if, of course, anyone tries to grasp them. The passing shows will make you smile through eyes and lips with a joyous heart. Some hints are given.

In younger days I was sitting by the side of a window. My eyes caught sight of an empty cigarette packet lying on the road. Clear letters on it were 'Passing Show'. The letters stuck to my mind and I became thoughtful. Some voice within whispered "Are not what you see just passing show? Will they ever repeat in your eyes?" It startled me. I wanted to go deeper, but you know, the mind seldom stays long on a point. So I call him *Nārada*jī who does not stay long in any place.

Whatever it is, the seeds were shown and the words often recurred in the mind. I discussed this matter with people who may be called philosophers and saints. They

explained in many ways that the world is a stage. The parts once played by the players, animate or inanimate, just pass on. They explained, "Take the example of your body. It is changing and what you are now you are not the next. The entire creation is subject to changes. As the Time and Tide wait for none, so the creation. It is passing on. So none should have attachment with the plays as they bring failures in the life."

The philosophers tell much and write much on any point but cannot take you to the goal. So Vivekānandajī once said, "Religion begins where philosophy ends." Religion means loyalty and surrender to the Master with open eyes.

Well, let us now come to Jesus' eyes and ears. I was sitting looking ahead once in later days. I was in myself only. A road was passing by. People were passing through the road. Men, women, boys and girls of different ages were moving from East to West and West to East, some busy some steady. I marked all are different in talks, figures, garbs and gaits, as if some artists are playing some roles in the stage. The sites all around are the background of the stage. Unknowingly smiles spread over my eyes and lips. the heart was swinging in celestial joy and I became absolutely deaf and dumb. A sweet voice rose within, "Dear, these are the movies being produced by the director from eternal times just to please you."



Let anybody in his heart of heart believe in anything whatsoever as real—i.e., fit object of trust—and inevitably he must be forsaken or betrayed by that object. This is a law more stern than the Law of gravitation. The only Reality, *Ātman* (आत्मन्) brings home to us the delusion of seeing anything else as real.

—Swami Rama Tirtha

Sacred Places of Farrukhabad (U.P.)

— Dhani Chand

Kampil was the capital of ancient Panchal Pradeśa (ancient name: Draupadgarh) and is also known as *Kali Kṣetra*. Rājā Drupada's daughter Draupadī was born here and her *Swayamvara* also took place here. *Guru Droṇācārya* was also born here; Dhṛṣṭadumna of this area was a famous warrior. In ancient days river Gaṅgā flowed by this town but now it has receded by a few kilometres. This town is situated 40 km. north of Farrukhabad in the same district, connected by road, while the Kasganj rail line is nearby. For stay there are 3 Jain *Dharmaśālās*, U.P. Tourist rest house and Rānī *Dharmaśālā*. This ancient place finds mention in *Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa* (*Bālakāṇḍa* 33.19), *Śiva Purāṇa* (chapter 41-42), *Mahābhārata*, *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* and story of Rājā Brahmadatta; at present this area is famous for tobacco and potato cultivation.

The main temple is Rāmeśwaranātha where the *Śivaliṅga* is said to have been consecrated by *Śatrughna* brother of *Bhagavān Rāma* and the *Śivaliṅga* is the same as was worshipped by *Sītā* in *Aśoka Vāṭikā*. *Sādhus* can stay here. City folk solemnise many auspicious functions in the temple premises. Here there is an unusual well, whose water level is much higher than the surrounding lower land. A *Melā* is held during *Śivarātrī* and *Śrāvaṇa*. Nearby are the ruins of Rājā Drupada's fort; on excavation idols, coins and other artefacts were found. Nearby on a mound is the place of *Kapil Muni Āśrama* where a cave, some idols and materials

of worship have been found. Below that is Draupadī Kuṇḍa where milky water came out during renovation. Among the many disused ancient ghats is Raja ghat, above which is ancient Kāleśwaranātha (Śiva) *Mandira*. Legend is that its *Śivaliṅga* was consecrated by Yudhiṣṭhira and Draupadī; festivals are held on *Śivarātrī* and *Śrāvaṇa*. In Caumukhīnātha *Mandira* is a *Sākāra Śivaliṅga*.

Nearby is the 13-storey Auraiyā Bābā Āśrama. At Paraśurāma and Lālajīdāsa *Mandiras* festivals are held on *Vasanta Pañcamī*. In the fort are the Durgājī, Ānandī Devī and Mahāvīra *Mandiras*. In Kampil is a branch of Īśvarīya University (Mount Abu). *Rāmātilā* and *Holī* are celebrated with pomp in the town.

Five Km away in Bhedakuṇḍa place, Arjuna won the hands of Draupadī in *Swayamvara*. Seven Km from Kampil at Ashwani, *Pinḍa Śrāddha* ceremony is performed. Here, Rājā Drupada did penance for the birth of a male child; six Km ahead in Mudaul (Muṇḍavana) Śikhaṇḍī attained malehood.

Poet Nawaldāsa of Kampil became famous for his *Nawala Dohāwalī*; poet Tośinidhi wrote his famous *Durgā Pañcālikā* here and Śrī Dayānanda Dwivedī researched on the history of Kampil. Legend is that Kapil Muni preached *Kapila Gītā* to his mother here. Nearby important places are: Karab Wāle Bābā Āśrama in the jungle and Assam Wāle Bābā Āśrama and temple.

In the long history of the country, Kampil has been the centre of idealism, religion and culture. In our *Śāstras* and reports of archaeology deptt. such reminiscences are borne out.

Kampil (Kampila) is an important Jain centre of pilgrimage. This is the birth, *Tapasyā* and *Jñāna Kalyāṇa* site of thirteenth *Tīrthaṅkara* Vimala Nātha. The mortal remains of last *Tīrthaṅkara* Mahāvīrajī also came here. In the large Jain *Śwetāmbara* temple the main idol is of Vimala Nātha perched on a high pedestal; in the four corners are

monuments dedicated to Kalyāṇa-persons; the idol of Vimala Nātha in *Jain Digambara Mandira* is said to be 1800 years old. *Melā* is held during *Caitra* and *Āświna* and Jain *Bhaktas* come from far and near. Vimala Nātha was the son of *Sūryavaṃśī Rājā Ikṣvāku*.

Places of Pilgrimage in Farrukhabad town—

Farrukhabad is a district headquarter in Uttar Pradesh and a big town situated on the Kanpur-Kasganj rail line. 50 Km from Kannauj; it is also connected by rail via Shikohabad and state buses ply to various places from here at frequent intervals. Places of stay are *Dharmaśālās* and numerable hotels. *Kapūrkand Miṭhāī* and various *Namakeens* are a speciality of this town.

West of the town there is the 300 year old Gurgaon Devī (Durgā) *Mandira* here a *Melā* is held during *Navarātra* and *Āṣādhā*. Nearby is the 25 year old Kālī Devī *Maṭhiā*. North of the town is the old stone constructed Patiyāwālā (Śiva) *Mandira*. South of the town at Nauganwa ghat is the 250 year old Rādhā Kṛṣṇa *Mandira* where a festival is held on *Janmāṣṭamī*. In the cantonment area is the new and beautiful Rajput Regiment Rāma Durbar *Mandira*, here the idols of Śiva and Hanumān are also attractive. In Bholepur Mohalla is the city's well-known Hanumān *Mandira*; here the idol is big. In the *Mandira* are hung many brass bells and a festival is held on *Hanumān Jayantī*. The town's main temple, Paṇḍāwālā Bagh (Śiva) is on railway road; legend has it that this temple was established by the *Pāṇḍavas*; *Melā* and *Satsaṅga* are held on *Śivarātrī* and *Śrāvaṇa*. Nearby is the Palla Devī *Mandira*. In Mithu Kuja Mohalla is Gaṇeśa *Mānasa Mandira*, where festivals are held on *Tulasī Jayantī* and *Gaṇesa Cautha*. Behind Kotwali is Rādhā Kṛṣṇa *Mandira* where a festival is held on *Janmāṣṭamī*.



Revelation

—Satish K. Shukla —

Benign Rāma O !
So deep into your deep eyes
I never looked before
Ah! how perfunctory this
Yet how blissful the boon
Of awakening now
From worldliness torpid slumbers
Your look pierces my very soul
Your hand extended
In gesture of blessing
Opens, soothes my frayed nerves
Your feet, Oh! the Lotus Feet
I hardly ever noticed
The fool ! Of blighted vision
Blinded by so much banal illusion
Led by vain mirths mirage
I bow in reverence
At Your lotus feet
As at those of your consort
Janakasutā, the Jagajjananī.

The Halos bespeak Your godheads
The golden crown crowns
The very Creation
Your brow the solace to torn minds
Your bow a symbol, a reminder
Of the ascendancy of right

Over the power and pelf's might
The quiverful of *Rāmabāṇas* at the back
Giving the sulking Evil
Every deserved fright
Your hand a show of inscrutable effulgence
Dazzled, my look wanders to *Sītā* visage
The Mother warms the heart.

I wallow in waters of newfound devotion
Drawn everywhile nearer to you
Every bit fine, turning divine.
Is that what *Bhakti*
Does to forlorn worldly men?
Unmistakable is Your
Indelible imprint
On my innermost ken
The rumbling knock
On the doors of liberated geist
Of many a gathering storm
Of impending release?
From birth and death's painful den?



The Secret of Bhakti Yoga

—Swami Vivekananda

"Those who with constant attention always worship You, and those who worship the undifferentiated, the Absolute, of these who are the greatest *Yogīs*?" Arjuna asked of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The answer was: "Those who concentrating their minds on Me worship Me with eternal constancy and are endowed with the highest faith, they are My best worshippers, they are the greatest *Yogīs*. Those that worship the Absolute, the indescribable, the Undifferentiated, the omnipresent, the unthinkable, the All comprehending, the immovable, and the Eternal, by controlling the play of their organs and having the conviction of sameness in regard to all things, they also, being engaged in doing good to all beings come to Me alone. But to those whose minds have been devoted to the unmanifested Absolute, the difficulty of the struggle along the way is much greater, for it is indeed with great difficulty that the path of the unmanifested Absolute is trodden by any embodied being. Those who, having offered up all their work unto Me, with entire reliance on Me, meditate on Me and worship Me without any attachment to anything else—them I soon lift up from the ocean of ever-recurring births and deaths, as their mind is wholly attached to Me." (*Gītā* XII).

Jñāna Yoga and *Bhakti Yoga* are both referred to here. Both may be said to have been defined in the above passage. *Jñāna Yoga* is grand; it is high philosophy; and almost every human being thinks curiously enough, that he can surely

do everything required of him by philosophy; but it is really very difficult to live truly the life of philosophy. We are often apt to run into great dangers in trying to guide our life by philosophy. This world may be said to be divided between persons of demoniacal nature who think the caretaking of the body to be the be-all and the end-all of existence, and persons of godly nature who realise that the body is simply a means to an end, an instrument intended for the culture of the soul. The devil can and indeed does cite the scriptures for his own purpose; and thus the way of knowledge appears to offer justification to what the bad man does, as much as it offers inducements to what the good man does. This is the great danger in *Jñāna Yoga*. But *Bhakti Yoga* is natural, sweet, and gentle; the *Bhakta* does not take such high flights as the *Jñāna Yogī* and therefore, he is not apt to have such big falls. Until the bondages of the soul pass away, it cannot of course be free, whatever may be the nature of the path that the religious man takes.

Here is a passage showing how, in the case of one of the blessed *Gopīs*, the soul-binding chains of both merit and demerit were broken. "The intense pleasure in meditating on God took away the binding effects of her good deeds. Then her intense misery of soul in not attaining upto Him washed off all her sinful propensities; and then she became free."—तच्चिन्ताविपुलाहादक्षीणपुण्यचया तथा । तदप्राप्तिं महदुःखविलीनाशेषपातका ॥ निरुच्छ्वासतया मुक्तिं गतान्या गोपकन्यका (*Viṣṇu Purāṇa*.)

In *Bhakti Yoga* the central secret is, therefore to know that the various passions and feelings and emotions in the human heart are not wrong in themselves only they have to be carefully controlled and given a higher and higher direction, until they attain the very highest condition of excellence. The highest direction is that which takes us to God; every other direction is lower. We find that pleasures and pains are very common and oft-recurring feelings in

our lives. When a man feels pain because he has not wealth or some such worldly thing, he is giving a wrong direction to the feeling. Still pain has its uses. Let a man feel pain that he has not reached the Highest, that he has not reached God, and that pain will be to his salvation. When you become glad that you have a handful of coins, it is a wrong direction given to the faculty of joy; it should be given a higher direction, it must be made to serve the Highest Ideal. Pleasure in that kind of ideal must surely be our highest joy. This same thing is true of all our other feelings. The *Bhakta* says that not one of them is wrong, he gets hold of them all and points them unfailingly towards God.



We practise many things throughout our lives: some are good and some are bad. We renounce old habits and adopt new ones. If only we could adopt the habit of practising meditation and remembering God! At first we might not like it, but once we begin to practise, we shall find that soon we will not even have to try to remember God. Our minds will go to Him of their own accord. Even to forget the Lord for one minute will be painful. Such is the power of practice!

—*Way to God*

Man, according to the *Vedānta* philosophy, is the greatest being that is in the universe, and this world of work the best place in it, because only herein is the greatest and the best chance for him to become perfect. Angels or gods, whatever you may call them, have all to become men, if they want to become perfect. This is the great centre, the wonderful poise, and the wonderful opportunity—this human life.

—*Swami Vivekananda*

Dear Contributors/Readers,

We are passing through a critical time. The scientific attitude is fast replacing our traditional social pattern which may prove harmful to our culture. So to reestablish our faith in our culture **Kalyana-Kalpataru** decided to bring out **Hindu Saṁskṛti Number**.

A list of topics is given on which you are requested to write your articles of thought provoking nature. The focus of attention should be on the present and the future of **Hindu Saṁskṛti** more than what we were in the past.

We hope that our learned contributors will cooperate with us and send their valuable writings as soon as possible but latest by **31st March**.

1. Prayer—Vedic and Upanishadic
2. Historical development of Hindu Saṁskṛti
3. What is Saṁskṛti
4. Harappan Civilization and Culture
5. Hindu Saṁskṛti and Vedas
6. Gods and Goddesses in Vedas
7. Worship system in Vedas
8. Karmakāṇḍa in Vedas
9. Deification of natural objects in Vedas
10. Concept of Supreme Reality in Vedas
11. Cow—the synonym of Hindu culture; bull—the symbol of Dharma
12. Supreme Reality
13. Relation between Supreme Self and world
14. Object of creation and its Form
15. Upanishad—the origin of various philosophical schools
16. Influence of Upanishadic thinking on social construction
17. Varṇāśrama system
18. Cultural aspect of Epics
19. Rāmāyaṇa—an idealistic composition
20. Mahābhārata—a realistic Purāṇa
21. Mahābhārata and Gītā
22. Characteristics of Rāma, Sītā, Bharata and Hanumān in Rāmāyaṇa in cultural context

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| 23. Object of Purāṇas | 42. Sūrya and Sūryā |
| 24. Allegory in Purāṇas | 43. Yama and Yamī |
| 25. Development of Dharmaśāstra | 44. Auddālaki Āruṇi |
| 26. Contribution of Manusmṛti, Yājñavalkyasmṛti etc., in the development of Hindu Saṁskṛti | 45. Śwetaketu |
| 27. Self contemplation, worship. Laws of Karma and rebirth—Backbone of Hindu Saṁskṛti | 46. Satyakāma Jābāla |
| 28. Feminine Chastity and 'Satī Prathā' | 47. Self immolation of Satī |
| 29. Sixteen Saṁskāras and their importance | 48. Madālāsā |
| 30. Influence of Jainism and Buddhism | 49. Rāmakathā |
| 31. The Ācārya tradition | 50. Kṛṣṇa and Brajalālā |
| 32. Role of Guru | 51. Sāvitrī |
| 33. Influence of Muslim Saṁskṛti | 52. Nala and Damayantī |
| 34. Influence of Christianity | 53. Tiruvalluar |
| 35. Cultural geography of India—Ocean, Rivers, Mountains and pilgrimages | 54. Āṇḍālā |
| 36. Scientific studies and achievements | 55. Jñānansambandhār |
| 37. Yajñas are most scientific | 56. Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramahansa |
| 38. Medical science | 57. Vivekānanda |
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